

Amendments to the Claims

1-24. (cancelled)

25. (Currently Amended) A method of inhibiting membrane fusion between HIV and a target cell that expresses CCR5 or between an HIV-infected cell and a CD4 positive uninfected cell that expresses CCR5, comprising contacting the target or CD4 positive cell with a fusion-inhibiting effective amount of a CCR5 binding or blocking agent, wherein the binding or blocking agent comprises The method of claim 6, wherein the chemokine comprises RANTES, MIP-1 α , or MIP1- β .

26. (Currently Amended) A method of inhibiting membrane fusion between HIV and a target cell that expresses CCR5 or between an HIV-infected cell and a CD4 positive uninfected cell that expresses CCR5, comprising contacting the target or CD4 positive cell with a fusion-inhibiting effective amount of a CCR5 binding or blocking agent, wherein the binding or blocking agent comprises a peptide corresponding to an extracellular loop of CCR5 The method of claim 6, wherein the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 comprises the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 5, 6 or 7.

27. (Currently Amended) A method of inhibiting membrane fusion between HIV and a target cell that expresses CCR5 or between an HIV-infected cell and a CD4 positive uninfected cell that expresses CCR5, comprising contacting the target or CD4 positive cell with a fusion-inhibiting effective amount of a CCR5 binding or blocking agent, wherein the binding or blocking agent comprises a peptide corresponding to an extracellular loop of CCR5 The method of claim 6, wherein the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 consists of the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 5, 6 or 7.

28. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein inhibiting membrane fusion between HIV and a target cell that expresses CCR5 or between an HIV-infected cell and a CD4 positive uninfected cell that expresses CCR5, comprises contacting the target or CD4 positive cell with a fusion-inhibiting effective amount of RANTES.

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29. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein inhibiting membrane fusion between HIV and a

target cell that expresses CCR5 or between an HIV-infected cell and a CD4 positive uninfected cell that expresses CCR5, comprises contacting the target or CD4 positive cell with a fusion-inhibiting effective amount of MIP-1 α .

30. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein inhibiting membrane fusion between HIV and a target cell that expresses CCR5 or between an HIV-infected cell and a CD4 positive uninfected cell that expresses CCR5, comprises contacting the target or CD4 positive cell with a fusion-inhibiting effective amount of MIP1- β .

31. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 comprises the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 5.

32. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 comprises the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 6.

33. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 comprises the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 7.

34. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 consists of the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 5.

35. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 consists of the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 6.

36. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 consists of the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 7.